Balsa Construction

50 The balsa, made of triangular tule, was called tule boat (pumuk o´wan). It was made in three sections, a long central bundle and two smaller, fatter, lateral ones which formed slightly raised sides. Tules cut for the purpose were laid out on the ground or on ramada tops to dry.

An average-sized balsa held comfortably six people and their traveling possessions. [516] Everyone sat cross-legged. When there was more than one passenger a man poled at each end, the two men poling on opposite sides. The pole, of willow, was called owo´wɨn ai´yai according to the Chunut, J.A., but sa´hat according to the Tachi, M.G. Paddles of wood were not used. Women never poled unless necessary. The making of balsas and poling were men's work, as was the gathering of tule roots. The Tachi in- [524] formant said children would have crude little balsas of their own or would sit astride a large bunch of bundles tules when playing in the water.

Painting

302 Painting was a favorite form of ceremonial ornamentation with people of the valley and lake region. The general word for paint was [386] otsoi´amin. The colors were black (ka´lyan) made from charcoal, red (hoi´´iyu) obtained in trade from the mountains, and white (ho´sot) made from burned shell (but at another time said to be white clay). All these were pulverized in little mortars and mixed with grease for application. Several patterns were de- 302 veloped as symbolic of the wearer's totem animal (fig. 4). The pictures call for certain 825 comment. Coyote (kai´yu) had black about the mouth. Crow (ka´nkas) had black dots over the entire face. Sandhill Crane (u´lats) had white covering the entire right side of the face. Eagle (ṭo´hɨl) had two short black lines extending diagonally outward from the eyes and, about the lower neck and shoulder plane, a band of solid white which represented the bald eagle's white neck and at the same time was thought of as Eagle's sacred talismans of eagle-down rope. "Chicken Hawk" (su´hup) had long black lines representing tears from the inner corners of the eye to the sides of the mouth: "he cried all the time because he was lonesome." Cooper's Hawk (poi´yon) had similar black "tears" and two vertical white lines on the chin. Antelope (soi´yol) had two black lines radiating widely from the eyes. Prairie Falcon (li´mɨk) had three parallel oblique stripes on each cheek, white, black, white, and tied his hair up in a special kind of "screw" on the top of the head. J.A. knew of no Bear pattern.

302 White stripes and spots were made on the body just as one wished. J.A. said a person

1: Gayton E-5 (1925-1930) 1948 NS29 Yokuts NS29

[P. 64c] Wukchumni

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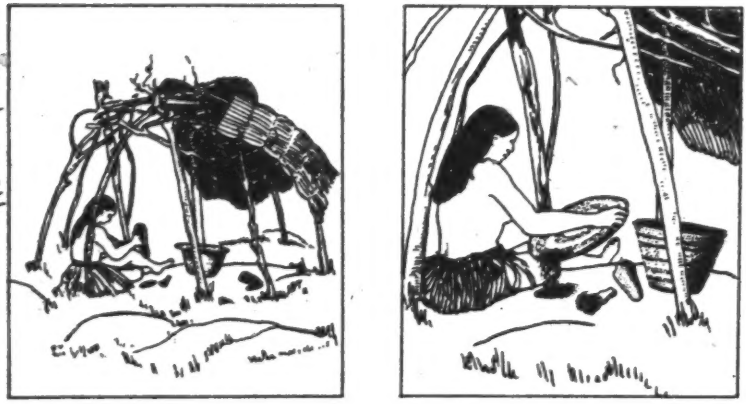

a b

Fig. 6. Wukchumni woman at bedrock mortar with seasonal shade. a, pounding acorns. b, sifting off coarse particles. (After photograph.)

281 long, was kept in a hank of folds about four
286 inches long held in the right or left hand as need be. Work commenced at the top right. The weft was passed through the adjacent twists as described above. When the bottom was reached the loose ends of the warp were tied together. The loops at the top were slipped off the pole, were given a couple of twists, and were sewed across as elsewhere in the blanket.

The frames were set up outdoors, and blankets were made when there was no danger of rain (April to November). There was no rule or belief that they should not be made at other seasons, the matter was controlled entirely by the prospects of the weather. M.S. insisted that only men made blankets. It is conceivable that this was so in her father's time, but that Mission influence led to women's weaving.

A third method of weaving rabbitskin blankets was described by the elderly blind Wukchumni informant, M.L. She stated that the double twisted ropes of rabbitskin were tied together to form a long continuous rope. This was wrapped round and round a two-pole upright frame. The lower pole was held down by pegs which were loosened as the blanket grew more taut. The weft of string was "sewed" across through parallel twists as above. Back and front warps, caused by the breadth of the frame poles, were pulled into a flat position beside each other.

Tule Mats

285 The word ṭ·ñi was used for any sort of mat; if one of tule were meant specifically, it was called su´'iu ṭ·ñi. Those for houses were made of the large triangular tule (pumuk). These reeds were laid out closely side by side on the ground, with stem ends alternating, in an amount needed for a mat. The worker started at the left-hand corner nearest her and, placing her right foot across the first three or four reeds and kneeling on her left knee, ran a thread of čiṭ·k string in a deer-bone needle through each successive stem. This meant that the needle was held in the left hand while the right hand forced the tules onto it (M.L.). (Unlike European sewing, the needle was a passive instrument when used in this manner.) The sewer moved onto the tules as she progressed, and started back from the opposite end for the next row of stitching. The rows were about a foot apart.

Sleeping mats and floor mats were made of
[516] the smaller round tules (šu´yu). The worker sat in a favorite Yokuts woman's position, with left leg forward and knee slightly raised, the right leg doubled sharply at the knee, the foot under the left thigh.[198] A pair of tules was

[198] The posture when working at the bedrock mortar (see fig. 6, herein), or at leisure (the normal posture of M.S. and M.L., who always sat on the ground); cf. Holmes, pl. 30.

285 taken up and tied in four places with long strands of string which were to be the twining wefts. The tules were added in pairs. Twining progressed over some six to ten tules in the first row before the string was tied in a single knot; then twining was commenced on the second, third, and fourth rows and continued in the same manner. The manipulation is shown in figure 12. While the first finger of the left hand held down one string which was turned back over the last pair of tules, the second and third fingers held the pair just being inserted by the right hand. The next move was to bring the loose string up over the latter pair, and have it replace the taut string which was released to become the next binding element. A well-finished mat would have a three-ply braid of fine tules sewed on all around the edge.

[516]

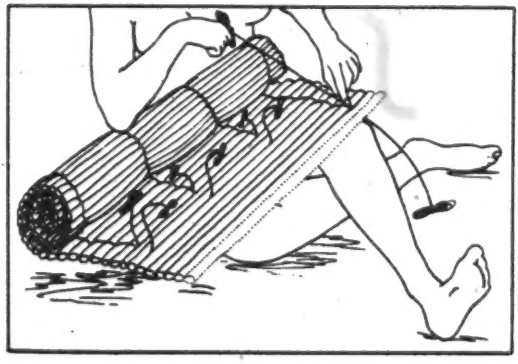

Fig. 12. Wukchumni method of twining small mats. Left hand about to press down on tightened wrapping, freeing right hand which will place next two tules (dotted in position) and pull under string up over them.

The same technique was used for all household mats, babies' mattresses, casings for feather ornaments, etc. Women invariably sat on mats when working outdoors in front of their homes (M.L.).

Flat tule (kots, "cattails") were little used.

Cordage and Nets

283 The strongest cord or rope (ho'), which was employed for all heavy purposes, was made from the inner bark of the button willow. Trees were ringed by means of an obsidian blade at intervals of three to five feet, depending on whether one or two sections could be gotten. The ringing and stripping were done in the fall. The inside bark peeled off readily after it was removed from the tree. It was laid out on flat

525 Informants and recorders disagree on scoring, and it may well be that there were local or even individual terms agreed upon at the time of play. They range as follows.

According to M.L.: two face up, 1; five face up, 1; all up, 4; all down, 4.

According to Powers: two face up, 1; five face up, 1.

According to Kroeber (Yaudanchi): two face up, 1; five face up, 2.

The score was kept by a woman who took no part in the game. The scorekeeper for any game was called ho'o'po':č. She held the scoring sticks, peeled willow rods about 1/4-inch in diameter and 6 inches long, and the stakes offered, and was "paid a little" for her part. The Wukchumni, Michahai, and Chukaimina used 18 counters; according to Kroeber the Yaudanchi used 12. A special manner of holding the sticks, in groups of threes between the fingers, as they were taken from the pile was in vogue with the Wukchumni. Different stages in scoring were designated: mulu'lăima, when all the counters are taken from the pile; čamău'ma, when one side has all the counters; kayuău'ma, when each side gets all the counters alternately; tu'ăi, the winning score, which is having possession of all the counters twice in succession, i.e., 2 čamăuma.

Women gambled as heartily as men. The stakes rarely ran over an equivalent of $2.50, and might comprise bead money, baskets, or some object which an opponent specifically desired.

Menstruating and pregnant women played, but a pregnant woman would pick up a little stick and thrust it in her belt or sit on it, "to bring good luck." No explanation could be offered for this by informants.

Hand game.--The game (hi'u'tniw:č) was played only at night, usually outside by the assembly fire. The rationalization given for this practice was merely "that it didn't look pretty in the daytime" (M. and J.P.). The method of play for the Yaudanchi is vividly reported by Kroeber in an account too long for reprinting here.[516] As with the Wukchumni, the marked piece was guessed for. Wukchumni of both sexes enjoyed the game and often played in opposing groups. Women hid the bones under a blanket; men held them behind their backs. The sexes sang and sat differently: women sat cross-legged, men knelt and thumped the rhythm of the singing with one knee. The singing was started by the women and followed by a phrase from the men so an alternating progression of song was made. The following lines were given by M.P.; the first phrase in each line was repeated three times.

[516] Handbook, 539.

796 band, etc. The singer accompanist, who was
[534] also a person with Bear totem, sat at one side
and used a cocoon rattle. The dancers stood in
[554] a row, with the most powerful or important man
at the right end, the woman at the left (from
the audience's point of view). The men held
[198] their hands cupped to their mouths to augment
their heavily aspirated grunts. The woman held
her hands beside her shoulders, wide open,
[516] palms forward, and her elbows close to her
sides. While the accompanist sang and rattled,
796 the dancers turned toward their left, and the
535 men, with feet together, took three slow, stiff
jumps forward. At each jump they exhaled a
harsh, hard "Xo'! xo'! xo'!" The woman remained
in her place and, with feet together and heels
off the ground, moved herself rhythmically with
a gentle bouncing-springing motion on the balls
of her feet. The upper part of her body and
her shoulders she turned to right and left on
alternate "bounces." She kept this up con-
tinuously while the men jumped and walked back-
ward to their former positions three times. The
whole performance lasted no more than ten
minutes at the utmost, yet it could not be re-
peated under any circumstances until the follow-
ing year. For this reason it was particularly
admired, and urgent demands for repetition from
the onlookers, with consequent refusals from
the dancers, seem to have been a traditional
part of the affair. If the spectacle were to
be witnessed again that season, it would have
to be in some other village or tribe with other
dancers.

[773] When J.P. was young he saw a Bear dancer
whose arms and legs were entirely black. Spec-
tators said to him, "If you are a bear, let's
see your hair!" At once the black portions
turned into hair all over the man's limbs.

796 The dance was supposed to be a replica of
825 real bears' antics; they were said often "to
dance with trees."

A man was out hunting once about sundown and saw a little bear dancing beside a small oak tree. He was standing on his hind legs and holding up his paws; he jumped at the tree three times. Then he clawed up some earth and threw it at the little tree. The tree was his singer and the little bear was mad because the singer made a mistake. The human dancers act just the same way [not toward their singer, however] and will not look back over their shoulders until they are through.

J.B. gave a similar anecdote.

His wife, her sister, and her cousin were out gathering seeds. They saw a bear dance. He was near a little white oak which they believed was his singer. He jumped and grunted three times, then he grabbed at the tree and playfully mauled it. Three times he did this and then went off. The women were much pleased at the spectacle.

[In the Bear Dance. -Anth Staff]

535 monies took place indoors, save the inception of a pleasure dance and a doctor's debut (see below). If a rain spoiled an outdoor dance, the [790] dance would, if possible, be moved into a large dwelling. But this was only if it was purely for entertainment. No ritual was ever held indoors.

MISCELLANEOUS DATA

323 Pottery.--E.M. said pottery was "used by
184 people long ago." She had never seen but one pot. This was owned by an old man (Old Dick) near Auberry, who told her what it was. Auberry [439] is within range of the Western Mono groups who may have been the source of Old Dick's piece. No one of the Kechayi used pottery, much less made it, in E.M.'s time.

276 Tobacco.--There was no cultivation of tobacco (po''om), but its growth was watched; it grew best on burned ground. When beginning [887] to turn yellow, about May, it was gathered by old people. The leaves were washed, tied in bundles, and allowed to sour, then dried and pounded. The leaves and stems of "a plant with berries" (kai'a'sni) were added and pounded with the tobacco. The resulting powder was moistened, shaped into round cakes, and dried. In this condition it was called šo'gən. The [184] fine tobacco, pulči'na, was not made by the Kechayi or Gashowu. E.M. knew what it was but thought "only Choinimni doctors" used it.

[787] The drinking of a tobacco and lime mixture was customary among people wanting to induce supernatural dreams, or those who sought good health "by keeping their stomach clean." The tobacco and burned shells of freshwater oysters (ke'wi) obtained from the river were pounded together in a small mortar, moistened, and licked off the pestle.

501 Ferrying.--Men and women were equally good
481 swimmers and usually crossed the San Joaquin River (or other water) by swimming. Babies or possessions were put in a large flat-bottomed coiled basket (ta'okač) made for ferrying. A swimmer pushed this ahead of him with his left hand, while he used his right arm, elbow horizontal and forearm swinging downward in an arc, to propel himself. The feet were kicked behind, but there was no splashing. In the same way a man might hold a baby or small child on [758] his left shoulder. One or two swimmers would push a log ahead of them on which a sick or infirm person would ride astride. A two-log raft was made for an invalid or corpse. E.M. [186] added with pride that the Kechayi were all good swimmers, whereas the Chukchansi were poor swimmers.

● 516 Posture.--Posture was not observed, as at this small reservation all people sat on chairs. [209] E.M., however, frequently pointed with her lips, with a slight raise of the head as she did so.

2: Kroeber E-5 (ca. 1918) 1953
NS29 Yokuts NS29

obsidian. Chukchansi face patterns are shown in Figures 45 *h–l*, 46 *m–o*.

Men frequently squatted rather than sat. For longer periods they sat on their heels, with toes turned together and hands on knees. The cross-legged position, the most common of all the world over, was not used, except perhaps on special occasions like gambling. Women stretched one leg out and folded the other back; or, at rest,

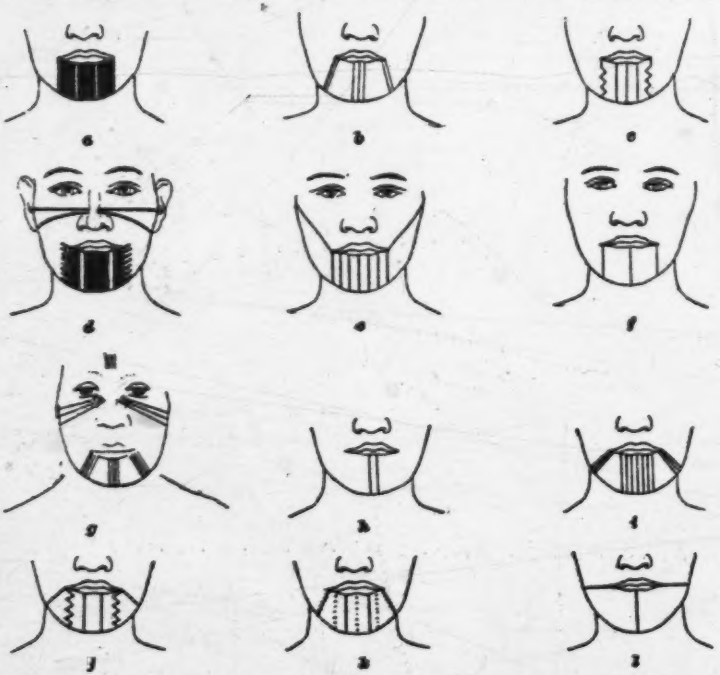

FIG. 45.—Women's tattoo. *a*, Yurok and northwestern tribes; *b*, *c*, San Francisco, probably Costanoan; *d*, Sinkyone; *e*, northwestern valley Maidu; *f*, northeastern and southern Maidu; *g*, Yuki; *h–l*, Chukchansi Yokuts. Compare the Wailaki, Yuki, Huchnom, and northern Pomo tattoos shown in Powers, Tribes of California, pages 116, 130, 140, 142, 144, 158.

drew the knees up and joined the hands in front of them. The Plains Indian woman's attitude, with both legs to one side, was not adopted. The habits of all the California Indians in these interesting matters are little known, but it is clear that custom and not inherited nature is the chief determinant. As at so many other points, nature seems at once to have furnished us a structure that permits a surprising variety of sustained positions, and to have deprived us of instincts favoring one rather than the other; so that culture has a clear opportunity to evolve the most diverse habits.

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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Yokuts bead money and three types of measurement used by various Yokuts tribes to denote one Chok, or unit of money. At the left is shown the measurement extending around the hand. At the center is the measurement extending from wrist to fingertips. At the right is the measurement around the hand foreward of the thumb. The Indian woman at the left is wearing strings of bead money around her neck and in her hair.

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Between the Wukchumne, *Pahdwishi* and *Kaweah*, the *Chok*, or unit of measurement of bead money—in other words, the Yokuts dollar—was the distance around the hand, measuring just outside of the thumb. Among the *Telumne* (Tay'-lumne), distant only twenty miles from the Wukchumne, it was the distance from the tip of the longest finger to the first wrinkle in the wrist. Incidentally, these two distances are almost equal. Some of the Yokuts tribes measured the chok around the rim of the hand. Ichow explained that in such cases the hand was placed flat on the ground and the beads measured around the hand from the last joint of the thumb to the last joint of the little finger.

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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A Chukaimina woman preparing to pound acorns. Photo taken about 1900 by Mrs. A. D. Overholtzer, of Squaw Valley Corners.

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948) NS29 Yokuts NS29

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Weh-puk'-in showing how acorn flour is leached. A shallow basin is scooped in the sand of a stream bed and lined with wild grapevine leaves. It is then filled with acorn flour. Hot water is poured over the flour until the bitterness has been leached into the sand below. The water is poured on a grass brush so that the flour will not be washed away.

soap-root husk. The tray was held with the edge over the mortar and shaken.

The coarse particles rolled into the mortar and the fine 252
material remained on the tray. The fine material was shaken into a separate basket. This process was repeated until the acorns were reduced to a powder of about the consistency of coarse flour. This was then taken to the stream, where the bitter tannin was leached from it.

A hole was made in the sand, by the stream, lined with leaves, generally from the wild grapevines, and the acorn flour poured into it. Water was heated in a separate basket by means of hot rocks and poured over the flour. This process was repeated several times, the flour being tasted for sweetness after

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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[142
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Wahaomhat, full-blood Wukchumne Yokuts from the Kaweah River east of Visalia. She is working in the old salt grass field near Guernsey, Kings County, where the Yokuts tribes have harvested salt from salt grass from time immemorial. On the ground is tuh'-mauk, generally made of cottonwood twigs and put to innumerable uses. This is a good illustration of features, posture, and the way the salt grass is pulled. The fingers of her right hand are bandaged in order to prevent the grass from cutting them.

mixing them with the refined product. The method by which this is done is extremely interesting, and has several times been witnessed and photographed by the writer.

The most desirable location in the vicinity of Tulare Lake was an area about four miles northeast of Guernsey. This area has been utilized as a harvest field for salt grass for at least one hundred and fifty years, and probably much longer.

Harvesting is done during the later part of July, or the first of August. At about ten or eleven o'clock the globules of salt are partly dried, too dry to be smeared in picking, and too

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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"Old Brin," an aged, blind Wukchumma, showing a typical Yokuts head of coarse, heavy black hair bobbed in mourning, also a terribly embarrassed granddaughter. Photo, taken about 1900, was furnished by Jesse G. Pattee.

in Visalia. She paid sixteen dollars for it. She had a good hat, shoes, socks, and underwear.

Mother stuffed the clothes with tules and fastened them together so they looked like a man. She painted the face. Then

3: Latta Y-5 (1923-1948)1949 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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Jennie, an aged **Wukchumne**, and her granddaughter. This photo is of importance because the granddaughter has on the bridge of her nose the marks of fresh cuts made by a medicine man. Her grandmother has on her nose the scars of such doctoring. Both have their hair bobbed in mourning. Jennie was a **Chumlus** at the great Eshom Valley Ghost Dance. Photo, taken about 1890, was furnished by **Jesse G. Pattee.**

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[775]

Then you bury your father, mother, maybe your wife. You put everything in ground and all decay. We *burn* good clothes and they *do not* decay. They go to *Tih-pik'-nits Pahn* [the hereafter] so our dead person always has good clothes to wear. What do you think?

On the sixth morning everyone was dancing when *Tow-ahn'-itch,* the morning star, was beginning to fade and it was getting daylight. The Teah called, "He'-ahm tahn'-hin," and everyone ran to the creek to be washed. The dancing and singing and crying of the Lonewis was over. We could be washed and dressed in our new clothes and have a big feast of meat and let our hair grow again.

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The *Chumlus* had our new clothes and new baskets to wash us in. She washed my mother and me. We took off our clothes

7:Powers J-5 (1871-1876) 1877 NS29 Yokuts NS29

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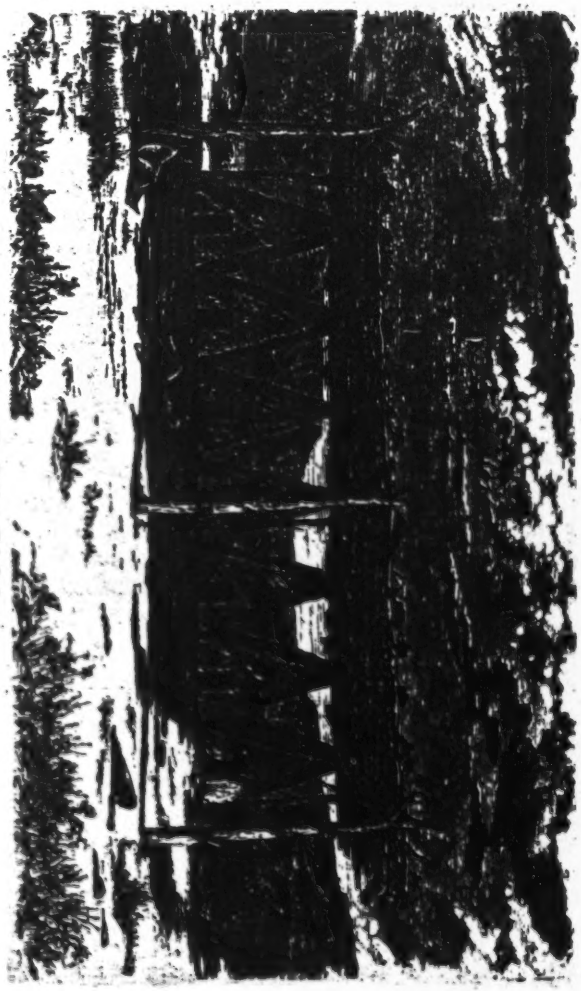

Figure 80.—Yo'kuts Tule Lodges.

[facing p. 370]